

There's an app for that?

By Joanna Hammond
Navarre Press

Most people are familiar with Apple's ubiquitous apps. From Angry Birds to the Weather Channel, there are many popular applications for Apple products to entertain, inform and educate. Soon, there will be two new apps specifically designed to help emergency medical teams to assess and treat patients in a variety of situations.

Dr. Richard "Doc" Clinchy has drawn on his 50 plus years of experience as an EMT to partner with two different companies to develop Apple based applications for both military and civilian use. Clinchy has a long history of working with the company KwikPoint, a company that develops visual language translators.

Clinchy has worked with Kwikpoint in the past to develop more helpful tools for paramedics and emergency medical personnel communicate with patients who don't speak English. The translators, fold out pocket guides with pictures and key phrases in a few languages that could help bridge the language barrier between medics and patients.

Working with the New York Fire Department, Clinchy and his team put together a presentation that showcased each of Kwikpoint's fold out, illustrated pocket guides in the EMS academy. Every student at the academy evaluated the cards to help determine which were the most helpful and useful in the field.

The result of this early collaboration was a multi-language laminated booklet that EMS teams could take along on every call. Still, Clinchy felt that there was room for improvement. The FDNY had been using a speech based translator, but it was cumbersome and complicated. The software required practice to recognize each person's voice in order for it to function properly. With more than 20,000 EMS personnel on the street, it was nearly impossible to get the



Photo by Joanna Hammond

Dr. Richard "Doc" Clinchy displays the VisualDx tool, a portion of the information he is using to develop Apple applications to assist civilian and military emergency medical personnel in treating patients.

units to function efficiently.

Then he had an idea.

Clinchy contacted Kwikpoint president Allan Stillman and asked him how he'd feel about taking the existing information and translating it into an interactive Apple application. Clinchy also contacted California based company Pangea Corp to get their input. Less than two months ago, Kwikpoint, Pangea Corp and Clinchy's company, Emergency Medical Resources formed strategic partnerships to begin development of the application.

Clinchy brings his extensive knowledge of EMS procedures and real world experience together with the software development capabilities of Pangea Corp and Kwikpoint. In addition to the civilian EMS app, Clinchy is also developing a similar product for military medics to use both on and off the

battlefield.

The military app is being developed with Special Operations Medical Handbook, a nearly two inches thick, three ring binder that medics take into the field with them to help diagnose and treat injuries.

Medics in the armed forces had been using some diagnostic technology, but it required internet access to function, something that is sorely lacking in the far flung battlefields of places like Kandahar and Tikrit. The new app won't have that handicap and will also allow Clinchy and his partners to tailor the application to be theater specific.

"The idea is to give the field medic a tool that can be used to diagnose and treat any symptom that may occur," said Clinchy. "There needs to be a lot of repurposing of the really superb

material these guys have at the moment."

Clinchy's role in the process is, in his words, "structure." He helps organize the material into a logical and linear method so medics can quickly find the information they need to treat both combat injuries and conditions that can occur off the battlefield.

"Part of the development work was to come up with a structure for military medics," said Clinchy, "that they could actually use."

Clinchy expects the Kwikpoint product to be ready for market by the third quarter of 2011. The military application may take longer, but should be market ready by the end of the year.

A demo version of that application should be operational in May, when Clinchy will travel to Fort Detrick, Maryland, to show it to military officials.